

Success Story

Thomas Jefferson High School (Cedar Rapids CSD)
Zumba Fitness Is a Hit!
2014-15 School Year



Summary

After attending the Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) workshop in October 2014, Mrs. Snyder was eager to develop and implement a plan at Thomas Jefferson High School in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Mrs. Snyder has been instrumental in developing and implementing high quality physical education in her school with a key program being CrossFit J-Hawk Fitness. With a vision of “Creating a healthier place to learn, work and play,” the team worked through the CSPAP planning process and identified a goal that would complement the already established CrossFit J-Hawk Fitness program and increase the opportunities for Zumba activities for students, staff and the community.

A survey was developed to gather input and data before the program was implemented. A pilot Zumba program was developed and implemented for a group of staff and students.

Challenges

The two major challenges were finding an available space to use on a regular basis and an ideal time to meet. An area that Mrs. Snyder refers to as the “old gym” was the best place to use in order to have a consistent place to meet.



Strategies

1: Ask the students. The CSPAP team decided it was important to get input from the high school students to see the level of interest prior to starting the Zumba classes and follow up after the pilot Zumba program. The team was encouraged by the overall positive response. The students felt it enhanced their overall health and didn't feel like they were working on fitness because it was so much fun. Starting with an interest questionnaire allowed students an anonymous way to give feedback.

2. Offer Zumba to both students and staff. This Zumba pilot was offered to both students and staff. Comments from the group reflected that it was worth their time to participate and they enjoyed getting to know people they didn't already know.

Result

The results from the pilot Zumba Fitness class were positive. The implementation reached a diverse group of participants and provided an opportunity to experience fitness in a new and different way. Some students even wanted to step up and lead a couple of the routines.

The post-survey was a five question survey that asked: 1) Do you like the idea of different fitness options offered for students? ; 2) Did you attend at least 2 sessions of Zumba Fitness? ; 3) Did you feel it was worth your time to attend Zumba Fitness? ; 4) Did you feel that Zumba Fitness enhanced your overall health? 5) Would you be a regular attender if this group continues?

Some comments from the survey follow:

- “I regularly watched a lot of laughter and smiles during our time together. Students and staff smiling, laughing and enjoying the experience!”
- “I didn’t feel like I was working out because it was so much fun!”
- “I got to know people I didn’t know”

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Future Directions

Mrs. Snyder plans to find a more permanent space to hold the Zumba Fitness classes and purchase equipment to enhance the presentation. Promoting staff and student involvement and encouraging students to take ownership of the program will continue as the program moves forward.

The Zumba group met a couple times after school but there was always a conflict with basketball practice. Plans are underway to bring Zumba back in the spring when there will be more space available. The group plans to meet at least one day a week for an hour starting in April 2015.

Grant Information

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